The RECONSTRUCTIONIST

VOL. XIV. APRIL 2, 1948 2 ADAR 22, 5708 No. 4

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Dedicated to the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of Israel's ancient homeland, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace.

the Reconstructionist

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EDITORIALS

THE YISHUV ACTS

THE Vaad Leumi and the Jewish Agency have announced that, on May 16th, the day after the British are scheduled to give up the Mandate, a Jewish State will be set up in Eretz Yisrael. This bold and dramatic step was the only answer the Yishuv could have given to the United States and the United Nations. In the spirit of Pinsker and Herzl, the Jews came to the inevitable conclusion that *there is no emancipation except auto-emancipation.* No nation or group of nations can grant the Jews statehood. The Jews alone can create the Jewish State.

The immediate cause of this step was the declared intention of the United States government to reverse itself on the question of partition. The richest, strongest and most influential nation in the world, which has taken the initiative in defying the imperial ambitions of the Soviet Union, quailed before the threats of a few Arab potentates.

The announcement of that intention left the entire issue in even greater confusion than that which had prevailed until then. Since November 29th, our government, which had been the main supporter of partition, appeared to be resorting to dilatory tactics. The reversal from partition to a UN trusteeship has raised more questions than it answers. Certainly, such a trusteeship would involve the use of arms, because the Jews could not consider trusteeship unless immigration and the right to buy land were guaranteed — and in that case, the Arabs would be just as recalcitrant as before. The reversal of policy, therefore, could be interpreted in only one way by the Yishuv: the American government would have no part in setting up the Jewish state, if that would involve the use of force, even though the government would have to resort to force to implement any other policy.

The alternative to setting up a Jewish state was to invite chaos. Until the United Nations Assembly meets, which cannot be before April 15th, no steps for implementing an alternative plan to partition can possibly be taken, even assuming that a plan which the Jewish people could honorably accept could be devised. There is no good ground to believe that America would be any more prepared to implement the trusteeship plan which the State Department now favors than to implement the partition plan which the government favored when the UN Assembly was in session. On May 15th Great Britain will abandon the Mandate. It would have been the height of irresponsibility for the Vaad Leumi and the Jewish Agency to assume that in that month the

UN would set up a government capable of maintaining order and the indispensable government services. The only plan for the future government of Palestine which has international sanction at the present time is the partition plan. By proceeding on its own initiative to implement that plan, the Yishuv is acting not only in defense of Jewish freedom but in defense of international law against international anarchy.

The Yishuv had to assert its authority to set up a Jewish state. To this there was no other alternative. But what is to be commended is the moderation and restraint with which the Yishuv acted. It must be borne in mind that partition represents a great concession on the part of the Jewish people. With the failure of the effort to implement partition by action of the Security Council, the Yishuv might well have taken the stand that the considerations which induced it to accept partition no longer obtain, and could have announced its intention to claim the whole of Eretz Yisrael included in the Mandate. But it did nothing of the sort. It showed its respect for world public opinion by limiting its claims to those which after months of inquiry and discussion, the United Nations had acknowledged as valid. It made itself in effect the instrumentality for executing the will of the United Nations as expressed in its decision of November 29th, knowing full well the risks and dangers that such a course would involve.

Though the decision was taken entirely by the Yishuv, and American Jewry had no share in it, we are proud of the courage, resolution and sober responsibility with which the Yishuv has acted. It is up to the Jewry of America to back that stand with all the resources at its command. After having lived through so much frustration and disappointment, the Jews of Eretz Yisrael deserve the aid of all freedom-loving men and women everywhere. They are certainly entitled to the fullest material and moral support from their fellow Jews, who see in the Yishuv the last stand of Israel against the callousness and shallow expediency of a morally bankrupt humanity.

OCCASION FOR CONGRATULATION

ON Saturday, March 13th, Dr. Nelson Glueck was inaugurated as President of Hebrew Union College, the oldest rabbinical college in America. He is its fourth president, having been preceded in office by such distinguished personalities as Dr. Isaac M. Wise, the founder of the college, Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, and Dr. Julian Morgenstern, its president emeritus. To inherit the leading position in Reform Judaism from such men as these is an honor of which Dr. Glueck is no doubt gratefully aware. His scholarly attainments and personal qualifications account for the honor having been bestowed on him.

We also congratulate the Hebrew Union College and the Reform movement. The inauguration of Dr. Glueck may well prove a milestone in the history of that movement and of American Judaism. Dr. Glueck is himself a product of the Hebrew Union College. His presidency affords evidence that the Reform movement in America has the vitality to perpetuate itself; that it has not only taken root in American soil, but has also born fruit. What is more, that fruit, though nurtured by the soil and climate of America, has retained the ancestral quality and character of the "tree of life" indigenous to the soil of Eretz Yisrael. One of Dr. Glueck's significant statements on the occasion of his inaug-

uration was to the effect that he considers himself "a son of Cincinnati and a son of Jerusalem."

Dr. Glueck belongs to that generation of Reform Jewish rabbis that has revolted against the schismatic, negative emphasis of the early Reformers and affirms the indivisible unity of Jewish life, past and present, in Eretz Yisrael and in the Diaspora. This newer generation of Reform rabbis realizes that the Reform movement has by now virtually won its fight for recognizing the need of adjusting Judaism to the changing conditions of life. The majority of Reform rabbis today are no longer interested in discovering how much of Jewish tradition can be dispensed with. They are interested rather in ascertaining what of the Jewish tradition can be advantageously utilized to meet the spiritual needs of modern life. They want the cultural and spiritual heritage of the Jewish people to function as a force for good in the modern world and particularly in the life of America, where Reform has had its greatest development. The acceptance by Reform leaders of the idea that the Jews are a people, that they should seek to reestablish their cultural center in a free and autonomous Jewish community in Eretz Yisrael, and that Jews everywhere should foster their Jewish culture augurs well for the future unity of American Jewry. Dr. Glueck's appointment should help put the influence of the Hebrew Union College to the realization of these unifying and creative ideals.

His position will be no sinecure. The inevitable mistakes of Reform in its early pioneering days will render his work difficult. The assimilationist tendency, to which since the Emancipation all of Jewry has been exposed, found support in many of the teachings of the early Reformers. To fight the superstitious beliefs and authoritarian controls of a ghetto Orthodoxy, they deemed it necessary to disavow all connection with Eretz Yisrael, to deprecate the importance of the Hebrew language and to reduce the peoplehood of Israel to a mere wraith. Jews reared in those negative doctrines cannot easily accept the new teachings which affirm the importance of Eretz Yisrael, of Hebrew language and literature and of many other traditional values. Those new teachings have, therefore, not yet found the same measure of acceptance by the lay members of Reform congregations as by the Reform rabbinate. Nevertheless, they must eventually prevail because they represent a penetrating appraisal of the realities of human relations and a penetrating insight into the value of the Jewish tradition for the shaping of a better world. There is, therefore, ground to hope that, under the leadership of rabbis educated by men like Dr. Glueck, the progressive forces in the Reform movement will in time overcome the inertia of their congregations. When that happens, it will be a great day in the history of American Judaism, because in Reform congregations there are many to whom both the Jewish and the American world look with a great deal of respect, if for no other reason, on account of the social prestige, the affluence and influence to which they have attained.

Let us not be misunderstood. We do not expect Reform to merge with Conservatism, Orthodoxy and Jewish humanist groups in the adoption of a uniform pattern of Jewish thought and practice. A democracy—and we want the Jewish community to be a democracy—must, by its very nature, respect the right of individuals and of groups to differ from one another in ways that do not endanger the life and liberty of the community as a whole or of any other group. Where

there is a fundamental loyalty of each to all, where the life of the entire social organism is the concern of all its organs and members, there spiritual unity exists. That unity transcends, even though it does not obliterate, all differences of opinion and behavior. That is the kind of unity at which all Jewry must aim. It is a unity that insures the integration of the individual American Jew both in the life of universal Israel and in the life of America and of mankind.

The inauguration of Dr. Glueck makes us hopeful of achieving that kind of unity. All the addresses delivered at the week-end ceremonies which marked the event, notably those of Judge Samuel Rosenman, Dr. Joshua Loth Liebman, and Dr. Glueck himself, stressed the affirmation of the Jewish will to united activity and achievement in Eretz Yisrael and in the Diaspora. That is why the event has made us happy and grateful.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE McCOLLUM CASE

THE decision of the Supreme Court in the McCollum case, should go far toward correcting the tendency of the religious denominations to encroach on the public schools. Our readers will recall the case, for we discussed it in a previous issue (Vol. XIII, No. 17). Mrs. Vashti McCollum raised objections on constitutional grounds to the system of "released time" as practiced in the public schools of Champaign, Ill. The practice there was to set aside a certain period during which children whose parents desired it could receive religious instruction provided by their respective religious denominations. Mrs. McCollum contended that this practice violated the 1st and 14th amendments of the Constitution, which are the basis for the traditional policy of separation of church and state. By an eight to one decision, the Supreme Court, reversing the decision of lower courts, sustained the appeal and ordered the termination of the practice by the Champaign public school system.

No judicial decision, however, can, by itself, solve the problem of the relations of the public schools to religion. The divergent opinions voiced by the judges make that clear. Eight judges were agreed on issuing the writ of mandamus demanded by Mrs. McCollum. But two concurent opinions, by Justice Jackson and Justice Frankfurter, differed with some of the reasoning in the opinion of Justice Black who handed down the decision. Justice Reid dissented from the decision itself. This diversity of judgment is evidence of the complexity of the problem.

The dilemma of the public schools is well summed up by Justice Jackson when he says: "The fact is that, for good or ill, nearly everything in our culture worth transmitting, everything which gives meaning to life is saturated with religious influences. . . ."

The *raison d'etre* of the public school system is the need for educating young people for such participation in the political, economic and social life of the community as will bring out the best in them and in the community as a whole. The home and the church have their own contribution to make to the total education of the child, but it is only in the public school that children can be trained to live harmoniously and cooperatively with children of other religious and cultural backgrounds than their own.

If the public schools cannot teach democratic human relations, they cannot fulfill the principal task that justifies the interest of the state in education. Merely imparting the knowledge and skills that will help the pupil make a living without giving him a sense of life's values is not

only inadequate; it is mischievous. Without faith in the validity of ethical ideals, the more man knows, the more dangerous he is to society, for he will use his knowledge to advance his selfish ends. But faith in their validity is religious, and the inculcation of that faith is religious education. All the great historical religions teach that the moral law is divine, that the distinction between right and wrong is real, that the human conscience testifies to an Authority higher than the whims of the individual ego or the arbitrary decrees of any earthly rulers. To that authority they give the name, God. On our conformity to the will of God depends the true success or failure of our lives.

The inculcating of such a faith cannot be left to the churches alone for two reasons: (1) The Churches teach only their own religious traditions and do not cultivate an understanding and appreciation of the contributions of other faiths to the religion of mankind. (2) For religion to function it must suffuse every aspect of the individual's personality and of the culture of society. To teach history, literature, civics, art, philosophy or anything else without reference to spiritual values inevitably distorts the pupil's outlook on them. We doubt whether any one, even an atheist, would withhold from the child the knowledge that synagogues and churches exist, that sacred scriptures are cherished by most civilized peoples, that great religious leaders have arisen whose influence extended far and wide in space and in time, that among almost all peoples, events such as the attainment of puberty or adolescence, marriage, birth and death are celebrated in religious rites. But if that information is given grudgingly, if no attempt is made to satisfy the inquiring mind as to the significance of these religious phenomena of our culture, if curiosity about them is met with evasion, the child inevitably carries away the impression that religion is an obscene superstition. Education abhors a vacuum. Not to teach religion is to teach irreligion.

All of which does not relieve us of the need to be most vigilant in guarding against the abuse of the public schools by making them vehicles for teaching specific religious creeds from the viewpoint of a denomination or of several denominations. Such religious education as is legitimate and desirable must confine itself to two objectives: (1) It must make sure that our children do not grow up illiterate on the subject of religion; that they are taught something about the role of religion in civilization and how different religions have endeavored to perform that role. (2) While teaching respect for all religions that have profoundly moved great masses of men, it must put its emphasis on their common goals, their similar methods and their identical insights. The differential aspects of the various faiths should therefore be treated only descriptively in the public school, but their common aspects should be made normative, should aim at developing standards of truth and goodness and sentiments of reverence, gratitude and responsibility.

REALITIES AND VALUES

Mount Scopus, on which the Hebrew University and the Hadassah hospital are located, strategically dominates the Temple area and much of Jerusalem. To cut it off from the Jewish sections of the city has been an important objective of Arab strategy. Transit between the city and Mt. Scopus is accordingly a dangerous undertaking.

Nevertheless, (*af al pi ken,* "nevertheless" seems the key word to an understanding of the Yishuv psychology) both in

Hadassah and at the University, work goes on. Although some of the activities of the hospital have been transferred to the Hadassah clinic in the city, a corps of nurses and physicans continues to carry on at the hospital such activities as cannot be conducted elsewhere.

As to the University, in spite of the violence, over 1,100 men and women are at present enrolled, one tenth of them from the United States. Many of the classes, to be sure, have to be conducted elsewhere because of conditions. Faculty members hold some meetings in their homes. About 150 students and instructors are virtually barricaded at the University, and although there are no decent sleeping or eating accommodations on the campus, they continue precious experiments in the laboratories.

▼

WOULD YOU GIVE THE SHIRT off your back for the brave fighters of the Haganah?

Well, here's a chance for ex-GI's to do so. The Jewish War Veterans is running a campaign to collect shirts (O.D. or cotton tan) and trousers (O.D. or cotton tan) for shipment to Eretz Yisrael.

J.W.V. posts will collect this material and send it to National Headquarters, where it will be turned over to Materials for Palestine, Inc.

Instructions to donors: Shirts and trousers should be dry-cleaned or laundered, buttons replaced, insignia removed, and sizes marked in indelible ink. Waist sizes should be marked on the trousers, and collar sizes on the shirts.

▼

THE MARCH ISSUE OF THE *ORT Bulletin,* the organ of the American ORT Federation is devoted to an account of the 25th anniversary celebration of that organization which was held on December 21st in the Roosevelt Auditorium in New York.

Although we took no note of the event at the time, we hope that ORT will still accept our congratulations.

The work of ORT is the technical training of economically displaced Jews, whether they be DP's in the technical sense of the term or not.

The work that ORT is doing for the economic rehabilitation of Jews and the restoration of their morale is invaluable. It is a service not merely to the individuals who directly benefit by it, but to the Jewish people whose effective man-power for the upbuilding of Eretz Yisrael and of Jewish life in the Diaspora has been so depleted by the tragic losses of recent years.

▼

JEWISH LIFE IS LARGELY DEPENDent on propaganda, and propaganda, to be successful, must employ sound psychological techniques. Some of our Jewish organizations are happily learning the trick. Here are two examples:

1. The releases which the United Jewish Appeal has been sending out of late are no longer the dull argumentative or hortatory appeals we used to receive in past years. They tell stories. The stories dramatize the effect of the activities of the organizations maintained by UJA on the personal lives of Jews. They are therefore educational in developing the right attitudes toward the UJA and its purposes.

2. The Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith no longer applies the antiquated method of argument and apologetics in defending the Jewish name. It recognizes that anti-Semitism is not created and therefore cannot be uncreated by appeals to reason. Anti-Semitism is planted in the mind by suggestion. A caricature, a slogan, a gesture, a casual reference in a certain tone of voice—these are the bearers of the infection.

(*Continued on Page* 24)

Keneset Yisrael

By IRA EISENSTEIN

ALMOST everyone is familiar by this time with the plight of the Jewish people. The devastation wrought by the war and the rise of anti-Semitism have become part of the consciousness of modern western man. There was a time when Jews could complain that the problem of the Jew in the world was neither known nor discussed. Today the problem is known, it is discussed, and the possible solutions have been considered and reconsidered. Almost everyone now has taken a position on assimilation, survival, Zionism and anti-Semitism.

The Plight of the "Alienated" Jew

What is less familiar is the plight of the Jew himself, particularly the young intellectual, serious-minded Jew of America who has taken careful measure of the pros and cons of assimilationism, and has decided to throw in his lot with his people. He recognizes the futility of escape. He is moved by the tragedy of the unfortunate Jews. He is exalted by the heroism of the Jews in Eretz Yisrael, and, during the war, in the ghettos of Warsaw, and elsewhere. He has tried to study the condition of the Jews, both here and abroad.

But psychically he is alone. He is "alienated," as it has become the fashion to describe him in certain quarters. He is detached from the true source of his being. He has lost contact with his people. He is regarded by them as a kind of alien, and he feels alien to them. He experiences a certain moral obligation to be a Jew and to do what he can *for* the Jewish people; but he does not quite know what to do *with* the Jewish people. He detests anti-Semitism among the Jews as he does among the non-Jews. He abhors the cynicism which would either justify it or despair about it. But merely not escaping is not enough for him; he wants to know what to live for as a Jew.

Now, when he asks what to live for as a Jew, he does not mean to imply that only such a purpose would justify his being a Jew, or the continued existence of the Jewish people. These, he understands, are justified in themselves. There is the will to live, which is quite enough. But there is a difference between just living and living abundantly, living fully and richly, excitedly. As he looks about him, he is not impressed with the possibilities of such an exciting, full and abundant Jewish life. This is his problem. This is his yearning. He has been promised peace of mind and serenity of soul if only he would stop escaping from Judaism. Well, he has stopped; but he has not yet obtained that peace of mind, that serenity of soul, or that ennoblement of spirit which has been promised to him; and he wants to know what is wrong either with him or with his people.

This young Jew is the symbol of our time, the essence of the problem of Judaism in our day. Many attempts are being made to solve this problem. Many activities and programs are being organized. Young people are invited to join in this fight or that struggle to defend Jewish rights, to counter anti-Semitism, to nurse the sick and the poor, to rescue the disinherited. All of this the earnest young Jew does willingly and energetically. He gives of his funds, he collects from others; and yet he is no less dissatisfied. This is not exactly what he came back for. It does not yet coincide wtih the glorious de-

scriptions written by rabbis and emotional Jewish writers.

The Real Israel And the Jews

The trouble lies in the fact that the young Jew is not in rapport with the reality, *Israel,* but rather with the manifestation, the Jews. He knows what he sees, and he thinks that what he sees is the Jewish people. Actually, the Jewish people is something more, something different. It is an abstraction. The Keneset Yisrael, the Israel of dreams, is what we believe about ourselves and what we dream for ourselves. It is the ideal Israel that actually never was, but is always becoming. It is rapport with that Israel which the young Jew lacks, and for that reason all that he does seems to have no meaning, no coherence, no poetry, no excitement.

Perhaps an illustration will help. We are talking a good deal these days about the century of the common man. This, the Twentieth Century, is supposed to be the one in which the common man is emerging. Who is he, this "common man"? Certainly he is not the average man we see around us who travels on subways and goes to movies, listens to the radio, attends the ball games, reads the tabloid newspapers. Is this the common man to whom we want to entrust our destiny? The common man is obviously also not the superman, the one outstanding individual who believes himself to be the savior of the world, and who considers himself beyond good and evil. Someone has very cleverly put it as follows: "He is in the people as the possibility, the hope. He is an ideal standing above the people. He is a symbol of what mankind, both individually and collectively, ought morally and spiritually become and must become." Obviously this writer who speaks so intimately of the common man never saw him. He believes in him because he is a hope, a possibility. He is the potentiality of every man. He is the indispensable person, or persons, without whom the human race has no future. The era of the common man is the age in which there will be enough of such people to make the world rational and peaceful.

The common man then, is a faith. The ordinary men, seen as they are, offer little hope that they will become transmuted into "common" men; but seen in the larger context of potentialities, the common man is a real possibility, something to live for and to create.

In a larger sense the same is true of the idea of God. When we look about us and see the world as it is, we are hardly encouraged to identify any of it as divine. But when we think of the world in the context of great potentialities, the scene changes. On the surface, it is barren; but faith sets before our eyes the world as it could be, as it should be and as it must be, just and peaceful, free of want and fear. God is the cosmic assurance that it will be so. *It is the potentiality within the real that makes the real worthwhile.*

But to return to Israel—what is true of the human personality and of religious faith is true of the peoplehood of Israel. Keneset Yisrael is to the Jews what the common man is to the Twentieth Century, and what the idea of God has been to the world. Keneset Yisrael makes of us a people with a purpose and a plan. It gives us a vision of what we might become. It is the source of our morale. It is a picture of us as we shall be. It enables us to see our people as they really are, seen through the eye of our own genius rather than the eyes of the Gentiles. The idea of Keneset Yisrael is like an X-ray which we use to penetrate beneath the surface of the Jew, to see him

in the innermost depths of his being. Layer upon layer of generations has made him what he is today. But we do not understand him unless we penetrate deep down through every layer to the earliest.

The Soul of Our People

That is what we mean by contacting the soul of our people. It helps us to understand why we have the kind of heroes we have, the kind of mythical heroes like Abraham, of whom it is said that he represented justice, that he challenged even God to be just. We can understand what a Moses meant; meek, self-sacrificing, patient and powerful. When we know why Israel chose such a man to be a hero we know something about Israel. Isaiah, Ezekiel, Akiba saw Israel, not on the surface alone, but always in the light of some great destiny, some role on the stage of the world. We must look into the Prayer Book and the Bible, into the Law Codes and the calendar of the Jew. We must go and see at first hand how he lives when he is living *at his best,* what he says when he is speaking *at his best,* what he prays for when he is praying sincerely.

We must try to understand what has endured and what is transitory, what is part of the very essence of his soul and what he has picked up along the way; what is the product of assimilation and imitativeness and what has been forged out of his own genuine experience. When we have seen this and heard Israel's most eloquent and authentic voices, then we shall find much, perhaps, that needs to be changed, much of which we cannot altogether approve; but we will have discovered Keneset Yisrael, and then the surface will have another meaning. We will see what we see in a new context.

Keneset Yisrael and Zionism

For example, we shall look upon the return to Zion in our day not just as a nationalist movement imitating the *goyim.* We will not see it as a momentary reaction to an outbreak of anti-Semitism, a frantic and foolhardy enterprise growing out of a momentary adversity. We will see it as the fulfilment of a faith, a culmination of a hope, the vindication of the sufferings of endless generations of Jews. We will see it as the fierce demand that there be an end to wandering and to 'suffering and an end to suffering for others' sins. We will see it as the *shekinah* returning to Zion. We will see it as the revival of a civilization and the renaissance of a genius.

When we have become reunited with the soul of Israel, and see it not merely as a conglomeration of organizations clamoring for the attention of people and their funds, working and overlapping and duplicating and wasting, we will see it as Keneset Yisrael with a long history dedicated to high ethical ideals of education and philanthropy, fellowship and mutual aid. We will see it as an organism struggling to live in a new environment, and to change itself over as primitive organisms had to change themselves over when they moved from the water to the land. The Jewish people is struggling to live in a new medium. For centuries it lived in the water of segregation, privilege and autonomy. Today, it is trying to live on the land of democracy, equal rights and voluntarism. The evils that are thrown up to the surface are the bad blood that is produced by the struggle. Those of us who are close to the soul of Israel know what Keneset Yisrael once was without lust for power or glory or domination. We see it as potentially that again.

Keneset Yisrael and the Synagogue

So it is with the synagogue. When you look at it as a stranger, you see a building and people, some of them important and others not, some rich and some poor,

with some indifference and some interest, some ignorance and some knowledge, some sincerity and some hypocrisy. You see it with its mortgages and its *machers*. But in the light of Keneset Yisrael, you see it as the eternal light of a faith in a God who raises the lowly and releases the imprisoned, who redeems the humble and helps the poor. You see the synagogue of the Orient and the synagogue of the West, the synagogues of Europe as they were, and as they were burned. You see the synagogues of the Kabbalists, the Hasidim and of proud Spanish families. You see the Synagogue, in other words, as the continuing articulation by an eternal people of a faith. You do not dispose of what you see with a gesture of contempt and impatience; but you weep at its fall from greatness, and you stand in awe of its possibilities of rebirth.

Kenest Yisrael and Jewish Education

And so it is with our Jewish education. Look at it with the eyes of a contemporary, and you see a few children and a few scattered schools. The children are unwilling and restless, the teachers tired and impatient. There are many problems because boys and girls are so busy, and their parents are so indifferent. But when you look at the Jewish school as the school of Keneset Yisrael, and you think of the words which the pupils are taught, and remember that these words were upon the lips of Jews for a hundred generations, that the language has come to life again after a sweep of centuries, when you realize that the process of Torah runs like a thread through the history of wars and exile, poverty and persecution, then you hear once again in the prattle of these unwilling children the undying poetry of a people.

In sum, this is our task today. We must learn to see Jews not only as they are, but as they can be, in the light of what Jews dreamed they were and dreamed of becoming. It is only in that way that we can be lifted up out of the morass of self-hate and self-deprecation. Only in this way can that dread alienation be alleviated. Then one becomes part of the stream of Jewish history, and one lives in all the generations at once. Steeped in them, one catches a glimpse of the spirit and the direction of our future. Then the revival and the reconstruction of Jewish life in our generation becomes part of the very being of the Jew. It is for this that he begins to live and to strive.

Nordic

By IRVING WHITE

BLUE and white crepe paper stretched from one end of the big hall to the other, and strips of brightly colored paper decorated the Japanese lanterns hanging from the ceiling. Light-hearted, happy young people moved from the stick-the-dart-in-the-poppy booth at one end of the room to the pick-a-Queen-Esther booth at the other end. Big blue paper letters hung across the doorway spelling out *"Purim Carnival."*

Robert Connors gave two tickets to the ticket taker at the door.

"Goes for a good cause, pal—the Jewish National Fund," the young man at the door said with a smile.

Bob pretended not to hear him and self-consciously walked in with his pretty date.

Tall, 6′3″, blond, with handsome features, he caused many a young lady to

turn her head. He felt their eyes on him. Why had he come here?

"Listen, Dorothy, we'll leave soon. Remember, I only came because you said you had to help your girl friends for a little while," he said to the girl he brought.

"Okay, Bob, I'll help my sorority sisters run one of those booths for a while and we'll beat it," she said, flashing a smile that showed even, white teeth.

Bob walked over to a less bustling corner of the room to wait. He sat down on one of the folding chairs. Why had he come? How had he let himself be talked into it? A sweat broke out on his forehead. He looked around and saw many of the Jewish faces that he was accustomed to see on the campus and in his classes.

Why had he always had that gnawing feeling at his heart when he was in such a crowd? He had always feared these Jewish gatherings for some reason which he didn't know. Even before he had changed his name, he avoided the Jewish kids.

The juke box began to play Freddie Martin's "Dream," and couples began to fill the floor. A good-looking fellow with dark hair was dancing cheek to cheek with a trim pretty girl. Her features were also dark and Semitic. Bob followed them with his eyes as they moved with the beat.

He envied them. They belonged. No escape for them. They were Jews. Why wasn't he dark and Semitic? Why had he been born blond and Nordic, leaving him an open path away? Escape was easy. Or was it?

He remembered when he was a high school kid, Bob Kahn then, going to school one morning with his boy friend Jerry Geller. Some Irish kids had gotten tough with them.

"You Jewish?" one of them had asked Jerry.

"Yes, and proud of it," Jerry had answered defiantly with his fists tightening.

Bob winced as he remembered how he had told them that he was German and how they had believed him because of his blond hair and how he had stood by while they were beating Jerry up.

The juke box played softly as a male singer began to sing "Dream, when you're feeling blue; Dream, that's the thing to do." A girl selling carnival money stopped by his chair and asked him if he wanted to buy some money.

"No, I'm only here because my date has to help," he said apologetically, getting red in the face.

"That's all right," the girl answered, "You don't have to give me any excuses."

He watched the happy crowd, the slow dancers moving to the soft music, and he looked at the gay decorations on the ceiling and walls. His mind wandered back to that morning and the tussle. Why had he not had the courage to say he was Jewish? Until then there was no emptiness, no gnawing.

That morning he thought that he had broken the chains that bound him. That morning had opened a path for him. Bob remembered how he had gone to the high school prom with the class queen who was Gentile. He had refused to take a Jewish girl. He remembered how he had "Protestant" engraved on his dog-tag when he was in the Army. No one knew the difference. It was easier that way. After his discharge, he had come out Midwest to school, having his name legally changed to Connors.

A shout went up from a little group standing in front of the dart booth. A young lady had hit the poppy in the "hamentash" with five darts in a row, and walked away with a big Haman doll as prize.

Bob felt lonelier than ever. Dorothy, his date, came over to where he was sitting.

"What's the matter, droopy? Crack a smile, will you?" she said, imitating his sullen expression.

"Dot, do let's get out of here. We can still catch the early floor show at the Mayfair Room," he said, hoping that this would encourage her to leave. It did. She told him to pick her up at the Queen Esther booth in ten minutes and they'd leave.

Bob let out a little sigh of relief. He went out in the hall and picked up Dorothy's coat and his overcoat in the check room. He wanted to leave immediately. It wouldn't have looked so good if any of his frat brothers had found out that he had been to a Jewish affair with a Jewish date. They might have suspected something.

He came into the hall and found Dorothy. Some unseen person suddenly stopped the juke box music at the other end of the room. The dancing stopped. The merriment subsided, and the crowd became silent.

On the stage, in front of the big hall, stood a young man with a microphone in his hand.

"Attention, everyone," he began. "In the next few minutes, the girls will pass out J.N.F. boxes. I expect everyone to contribute as much as he can." He spoke in a confident, self-assured manner.

Bob stared at the figure on the stage. His arms fell limply to his sides. He suddenly felt very weak as he recognized Jerry Geller on the stage.

He grabbed Dorothy by the arm and walked out of the carnival room. He stepped out into the night. The winter wind kicked up and Bob suddenly felt very cold.

Impressions of Shanghai Jewry

By Z'EV KRONISH

I WAS very fortunate to arrive in Shanghai on Lag Ba-omer. For I was able to participate in the Lag Ba-omer *neshef* of the Habonim Labor Zionist Youth organization and meet an active young Zionist element that could some day become influential in Jewish affairs. Furthermore that loneliness that often accompanies me when I first arrive on a new scene was drowned out with the singing of Palestinian songs and the discussion of Jewish problems.

Within less than two weeks I had met with the leading personalities of the Shanghai Jewish Community. I had visited the homes, and listened attentively to the reminiscenes of many Jewish families, young and old. I also made a brief study of their financial institutions, political and social organizations, and elementary and secondary schools.

A Functioning Community

Approximately 15,000 Jews now reside in Shanghai. Fifty two percent are males. Shanghai Jewry is organized, and conducts various Jewish activities and projects. While the common language is either German or Yiddish, many have picked up a practical knowledge of English in recent years.

The Jewish community is divided into two segments: those who arrived in the country before 1938 and those who were fortunate enough to escape from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland between 1938 and 1941. Jews came to Shanghai from Russia between 1917 and 1920 to escape the consequences of the Revolution. They came via Siberia to Harbin and finally to Shanghai. Polish Jews began arriving in China in large numbers in 1941 via Kobe, Japan. They

were assisted by a well-known Japanese Hebrew scholar, Prof. Kotsuji.

Between March, 1946, and March, 1947, 4,100 Jews are estimated to have emigrated from Shanghai: 1,000 went to America, 800 down to Australia, 800 returned to Austria, a few hundred went to South America, and some settled in England and Belgium. Very few succeeded in obtaining certificates and passage to Palestine.

The Zionist Movement and Parties

The Jews in Shanghai still cling to party loyalties and old dogmas; inter-organization rivalries still dominate all phases of Jewish life.

At the polls for the Congress Elections, the General Zionists received the most votes, followed closely by the Revisionists. Trailing behind was the Labor Zionist party and behind them came the Mizrachi. Shanghai Jewry was authorized to send only two delegates. Much money was poured into the election campaigns and each party subsequently accused the others of questionable procedure.

Every Zionist organization with the exception of the Mizrachi (and Bachad) has its own *ulam* or headquarters, all located on the same avenue; two, in fact, are adjacent to each other. To the best of my knowledge, judging from what I saw and was told, they conduct few cultural, educational activities or seminars. *Torah lishmah,* learning for the sake of learning, is practically unheard of. This is very distressing, in view of the fact that a Jewish youth ignorant of our people's history and literature will not be in a position to foster the creation of a dynamic Jewish way of life, no matter how severe the blows of religious persecution.

The only lecture of Jewish cultural and historical content that was sponsored during the short time I was in China was on the topic of the Hasidic movement and was delivered by a very able Yiddish speaker, Mr. Bergman, tall and lanky director of the Shanghai Refugee Hospital. Another public Jewish gathering I attended was sponsored by the Revisionists. The occasion was a report by Miss Hasser, young and pretty Revisionist representative to Basle, on her impressions of the Congress and European Jewry. She spoke in very fluent English, and in detail. She was, however, too sarcastic, disrespectful, and given to exaggeration and prejudice. Her address served, therefore, to satisfy only the followers of her movement but tended to alienate potential friends.

Jewish Youth

There are only three actively organized Zionist youth groups in Shanghai: Bahad (Orthodox), Betar (Revisionist) and Habonim (Labor). Betar is the largest and most militant; Habonim is growing smaller with the emigration of its *haverim* to other parts of the globe; and Bahad is the smallest unit. The significance of these facts is: young Jews, even those once persecuted by Nazis, are interested primarily in Jewish political affairs, if they are sincere Zionists, or in social activities (dances, etc.), if they are *"stam* Jews" (i.e., Jews without special denomination) and only vaguely aware of either a religious or cultural heritage.

The remainder of Jewish youth is unaffiliated and decidedly disinterested in Judaism. To illustrate — I attended a well-planned "Amateur Nite" festival a few days before I left Shanghai. The program consisted of a variety of dance and song presentations; the audience was packed mostly with young people; the applause and excitement were spontaneous. Yet only a few nights prior to "Amateur Nite," when Mr. Bergman delivered his interesting lecture on Hasidism, only about five young heads could be counted;

the rest of the audience consisted of middle-aged and older people. The lack of interest displayed by young Jews could not possibly be because of their inability to understand Yiddish, since that is their native tongue; nor could it have been the fault of the speaker, who is by far one of the ablest Yiddish speakers in all of Shanghai. The simple truth of the matter is that the younger generation "just wasn't interested."

Jewish Institutions, Schools and Newspapers

Of the three Jewish day schools, I visited two. There is also a Bet-Yaakov school, a Talmud Torah and a Jewish Community Center. The Center conducts all sorts of non-Jewish activities and projects, such as their Amateur Nite program mentioned above, which featured French dances, German songs and American jokes and jazz, but offered no Jewish entertainment.

The synagogues in Shanghai can be counted on your fingers. On Shabbat I "davened" at a Sephardic *shul*. It was crowded and not very different—in fact, *not different*—from the many synagogues in New York which cater to the proletariat.

The only *Jewish* newspaper is published in German, appears daily, sells for 2,000 CNC dollars (8¢) and boasts 2,000 regular subscribers.

The Shanghai ORT School was begun in 1941 by one Mr. Rosenbes. Thus far they have trained 2,430 students (as of May 20, 1947). Their peak registration was in May, 1945, when 420 students were registered for one block. Like most other institutions and people subject to air raids, they had had their share of trouble, for at one time their building collapsed and their activities came to a halt. They finally obtained another building.

Nine hundred and fifty of the 2,430 graduates mentioned above took courses in technical fields. One hundred and twenty men and 331 women took courses in the clothing trades. In various trades 228 men and 86 women were trained. Four hundred and twenty men and 3 women applied their energies to learning civil, mechanical, internal combustion, electrical and chemical engineering. (The women majored in chemical engineering.) The Complementary School for Apprentices registered a total of 194 boys and 98 girls during this 6½-year period. The ORT School has 34 instructors, 200 students (240 can be accommodated) and uses 8 classrooms. This term they are teaching 14 different courses.

YIVO's main task is cultural research and advancement. Toward that end they have unearthed Jewish magazines and manuscripts that were published as long ago as 1904 in Shanghai by the Zionist Organization, and by Jewish bodies in Tientsin and Harbin, other centers of Jewish culture. YIVO has also collected a set of 21 original books and pamphlets that were published (mostly by missionaries) about the Chinese (Kaifengfu) Jews. And they also are in possession of a special set of 6 rare books which they had autographed. They have sponsored lectures and exhibitions and are making a very great contribution in Shanghai toward the appreciation of *Yiddishkeit* and Jewish literature and history.

Post-War Conditions

Shanghai has 5 or 6 Jewish refugee camps which accommodate altogether about 1,500 men, women and children. The camps' equipment and facilities are inadequate.

Only the poorest Jews live in these refugee camps. Other refugees dwell in one-room flats which closely resemble

those on the Lower East Side and frequently are far worse. Hot water, for example, is as rare as the non-extinct Chinese Kaifengfu Jews. What water is available is not safe for either drinking or cleaning the teeth because chlorinization has not yet been nationally adopted.

Frenchtown, where the more prosperous Jews reside, largely resembles Crown Heights of Brooklyn. Most of these Jews are of Russian-national ancestry and arrived long before Hitler appeared in the headlines. Hongkew, where most of the refugees dwell, is overcrowded and the people live amidst squalor.

With very few exceptions—and I know of none personally—every individual that fled Germany or Poland, etc., in the late Thirties lost most of his relatives and forfeited all but his very necessary possessions. The majority of the refugees are bent on going to America; the more devoted Zionists are naturally anxious to make their new and permanent home in Eretz Yisrael. Other countries are being considered by the most desperate.

Of the 15,000 Jews left in Shanghai, 12,000 are refugees from Nazi terror. Their suffering, however, did not end with their arrival in China; Goya, a Japanese commander during the war, saw to that. . . . When the Japanese oppressors were finally defeated, the Chinese, in their own arrogant and sullen way, gave the Jews no peace. So to this day the Jews are desperate and anxious to leave the country. Their dilemma has been underpublicized in the American press.

The Japanese Occupation

One of the most startling discoveries I made while in China, though not entirely puzzling to me since I later lived among the Japanese for over twenty months, is that the average Jew was inclined to prefer the Japanese to the Chinese, in spite of the cruelty sometimes meted out by Japanese individuals. Even more startling is the fact that many Jews hold the Chinese city dwellers in contempt and consider them a potential menace to society.

The Jews were confined to a ghetto during the Japanese occupation. To leave the designated area a Jew had to present himself before a fanatic, cruel little man called Goya who considered himself "the King of the Jews." Goya was not a reasonable man and his decisions were prompted by mood rather than by rational considerations.

The Polish-Quota Problem

In 1939 about 20,000 Jews fled from Poland to the Russian border. They were mostly men who, because of the perilous journey they were undertaking, had left behind them their wives and children, intending that they should join them eventually. Two weeks later these Jews reached Wilno. From Wilno, in 1940, 2,000 left for Kobe, Japan. From Kobe, 1,000 went to the States and other countries, while the remaining thousand were sent by the Japanese authorities to Shanghai. Since the cessation of hostilities many of these Shanghai-Polish Jews migrated to America and other Allied countries. But the *she-erit ha-pletah* (the surviving remnant) numbers 500.

In addition to these 500 Polish-quota residents of Shanghai there are another 1,000 Jews that come under the Polish immigration quota because they were *born* in territory that was annexed to Poland after the first World War. The fact that many of these Polish-born Jews lived for many years in non-Polish European cities does not alter their citizenship and quota status. People, therefore, who were born in Poland but resided, let us say, in Germany for 21 of their 22 years, are registered

nevertheless under the Polish immigration quota.

At the rate which Polish quota holders are becoming eligible for visas to America, it may take less fortunate individuals or families as long as four, five or six years before they are given the opportunity to leave China for America.

The quota for the Germans, the Polish point out, is 26,000 for entry into America. The Polish quota is 6,000. For Shanghai Jewry the Polish quota for the next twelve-month period beginning with July is expected to be only 300. The only fair solution seems to be to register former residents of German cities, regardless of where their mother gave birth to them, under the German quota.

Conclusions

The Shanghai Jewish community is conscious only of Jewish politics, hardly at all concerned with Jewish culture or apprehensive over the lack of Jewish knowledge among Shanghai's younger generation. I can safely predict that those who do not settle in Eretz Yisrael will soon forget that they are Jews. For the Jews that came from Germany and surrounding Aryan states are conscious primarily of this fact: as Jews they suffered a terrible fate; they were driven from their homes and mercilessly oppressed. Yet in spite of Hitler's success in making Jews aware of the fact that they had to suffer because they were born of Jewish parents, that success did not contribute in any manner to aid these Jews to *appreciate* Jewish culture or literature. Unless they migrate to Eretz Yisrael and are surrounded by a Jewish atmosphere, they will assimilate themselves as thoroughly as they would have done if Hitler had not come on the scene.

As human beings, they are energetic and productive, full of courage, initiative and determination to start anew. They have survived the worst circumstances and lived under the most horrible, unimaginable conditions.

Perhaps the most important and significant lesson I learned during my stay in Shanghai is that the future of our people and civilization rests upon this premise: Jews who are not well-acquainted with Jewish history, literature and problems and who are unable to appreciate the struggles which we have fought and the advances we have made in moral, social and ethical fields will not long remember that they are Jews—no matter how many Hamans and Hitlers make their appearance. Any notion that the Jews of Shanghai constitute a separate Jewish cultural entity is unfounded. Politically they are stateless; economically the majority are not well-off; socially they are friendly and amicable; culturally the older generation clings to a dying Yiddish civilization, while the younger generation, with the exception of a handful of individuals, is ignorant of Jewish values, history, literature, Hebrew, and the other elements of Jewish culture.

We can help them financially, perhaps even secure exit visas for them, but the will to remain or become proud, intelligent, educated Jews—not merely human beings—is their problem. American Jewry can also assist by sending several Jewish teachers and educators—not only social workers—to Shanghai for a year or more. We have concentrated most of our energies on the rescue of European Jews and financing the reconstruction of the Eretz Yisrael Jewish Commonwealth, but cannot some attention be given to the refugee community in Shanghai? And I wish to reiterate: financial aid they have received from HIAS, the JDC, etc., but what they also need is cultural and educational assistance. The cultural institutions of America and Eretz Yisrael are responsible for progress in this field and should be willing to make the necessary sacrifices.

Book Notes

FROM THE SOUL OF PALESTINE JEWRY

MIBAIT, Literary Collection by Palestine Writers. Edited by Judah Burla. Hebrew Writers Association of Eretz Yisrael, Tel Aviv.

MANY of us have made the gloomy observation that hundreds of Jewish writers have either kept silent about the unparalleled tragedy of our people in Europe or have responded to it in a way which did not reflect the depth of our misery. Very frequently we asked ourselves the question: Will there be no literary work to parallel the lamentations of Jeremiah, and to serve as a true expression of our sorrow?

At last there came to our attention the book, *Mibait* which contains selections of the kind of inspired utterance for which we have been waiting. It is a collection of writings by Palestinian writers compiled in one book and sent to the Jews of Europe as a "token of brotherly love and as an identification with their fate, tribulations, and aspirations."

The book is divided into two sections. One deals with the Jewish communities of Europe that are no longer there. The other records the actualities in Palestine which hold a promise for the future of all Israel. It is in the first section, especially, that one can feel the full force of that melancholy symphony of the voices of millions of agonized human beings. The sounds are still hovering over us. They resound with the tragedy of a martyred people. The sorrowful overtones of this symphony permeate most of the poetry which appears in the section on Europe.

Lamentations for the Destroyed Jewries of Europe

S. Shalom, the young giant among our contemporary Hebrew poets, engages in a discourse with his Uncle Reb Aarele. They tour the Warsaw Ghetto. The poet wants to revisit the places and see the people who lived there only yesterday. During the tour the poet asks Reb Aarele many questions. But the poet himself must answer, for Reb Aarele is dead. The queries are simple, about men, women and children who lived and were known to both; about those who died in agony, others who faced death bravely, the children whose blood soiled the earth and flowed to the Vistula. And as the poet asks the question which no one can answer, namely, why it all came to pass, he is overwhelmed with pain. He pleads with Reb Aarele to tell him of the day of revenge—will it ever come? But, no, he had better be the emissary of the living to the dead and tell them that they are not forgotten, that their memories are being perpetuated in the old-new land and that only there will our people rise from their everlasting mourning and be happy again.

In a similar vein the poet, I. Lamdan, pours out his soul. His consolaton is in the realization of his people's superiority over its foes. "My people, look and behold these multitudes of human flesh hunters around thee. Thou art better than they, better than all of them! . . . Thou art better, because their children never wept in the nights that are deaf, and thine have. . . . Thou art better, because thou art one against the many, one against everyone!"

In three short poems, the venerable poet, David Shimonovitz, reaches a state

of ecstasy in the depth of his pain. In the first, "He did not keep his promise," he speaks of his pious father. This man, who never desecrated his lips with falsehood, had tricked him. His father had pleaded with him to jump off the train which was taking them to the gas chambers. This train was about to ascend a mountain and it slowed up its speed. The youth refused to part from his father unless he too, would join him. But the father whispered a half promise to his son, pushed him out and himself remained behind. In the second poem, the poet observes that the earth is quaking beneath him. This quake is produced by the restless multitudes of living Jews, who are digging in this earth, digging pits, deep pits. These are the grave diggers who upon the completion of this task are told to remain there, and are shot. They fill the graves with their warm bodies. All of these Jews are continually moving and shaking up the earth. If the world does not believe it and thinks that he, the poet, is unbalanced, then it is not the poet but the people of the world, who are insane. In the third poem, he asks the Almighty to have some consideration for His earthly creatures when they call upon Him. He, the man, has been crying out to Him and pleading with Him for so long a time. He changed his voice to a whisper and finally ceased pleading altogether. He considered it undignified for man to continue intruding upon the Lord, whereas the Lord had no such consideration for man. . . .

Jacob Kahn in the poem, "Sleepless Nights," hears the voices of protest of a great people waiting for the response which would assure them of the coming dawn, but the night lingers on and no ray of light pierces the heavy clouds.

A. Shlonsky vows not to forget a thing . . . until the tenth generation, until the pain of humiliation will subside. . . .

M. Z. Wolfofsky wanders with the rain and the wind over Poland, Lithuania and the Ukraine, in search for what was left, but he finds no one, only voices in the wind tell him: Here we *were*. . . . In desperation he shouts: Where are they? Where? but, alas, there is nothing left.

A. Meitus, M. Basuk and I. Ogen also give vent to their sorrows in a series of striking poems, each shedding his tear into the overflowing cup.

Prose Inspired by the Tragedy of European Jewry

The prose of this section consists, among other things, of a long essay by Prof. Klausner in which he attempts to give an answer to the eternal question of our continued misery. He surveys the reactions and viewpoints of Jewish sages through the ages, and endeavors to bring to the fore the idea that all sufferings are the forerunners of complete redemption. There seems to be no other answer. Another essay by Dr. Shmueli records the attitude of the Jewish communities toward the pogroms of Bogdan Chmelnitzki in the period of 1648-1658. This survey brings to light the fact that notwithstanding the great calamities of the period, the Jews refused to give up hope and awaited redemption. Three short stories by Barash, J. Burla and A. Ashman portray the wholesome characters of the pre-extermination period, who lived with dignity as Jews and as human beings, the anti-Semitic provocations and cruelties notwithstanding. A. Steinman cannot conceive of six million dead people. He sees in these masses that Jewish strength which frightens the entire world. The ghosts of the six million pursue all mankind, give them no rest, depress them and trouble their conscience. The ghosts constitute the present day Jewish force and the writer bids the world take cognizance of it. The famous G. Shoffman enriches

the book with his miniature character sketches, and the item by Streit, about the Rabbi who, like Job in his day, dared to question God's wisdom in plaguing His people, is particularly worth noting.

Stories and Poems of Eretz Yisrael

In the part of the book that deals with Eretz Yisrael, there is greater variety of subject matter, and wider representation of the Hebrew writers of the Homeland. While in Part I it is poetry that gives the book significance, in the second part, it is the prose element that best portrays the Eretz Yisrael motif of modern Jewish life. Some of the young talented writers depict life in the new surroundings very ably and dramatically. In reading their stories one cannot help but get the feel of life in Eretz Yisrael, which no Zionist orator can ever describe. One also feels certain that our DP's in Europe will enjoy reading this material and be proud of our achievements in the Homeland.

Asher Youngstein in his story "B'Har Ephraim" presents a psychological study of the life of the young Jewish farmer in the old established Zionist settlements. He sets it against the background of an ideal village life well rooted in the Palestine soil. All stimuli from the outside (newcomers, transients, visitors, from the city, Halutz elements, etc.) are absorbed and assimilated in the colony but they do not much affect the inner equilibrium of the modern Jewish peasant. Similarly, the description of a typical Jerusalemite of the old stock eloquently described by Joshua bar Joseph in his story, "Evening in Jerusalem," portrays the life of a native *baal bait* in the old section of Jerusalem. He is a second generation middle class Jew whose life is patterned after that of his fathers. His entire *lebensraum* is the little segment of the old city where the home, the synagogue, the neighbors are to be found. He is rooted in Jerusalem, which enables him to live his life to the fullest in a social milieu of Jews who are happy and content because they are Jerusalemites.

Of the stories depicting life in the post-war period and relating it to the plight of the DP's, the one by Joseph Aricha is very interesting. He chooses *maapilim* as his theme and tells the story of these so-called "unauthorized" immigrants whose only ambition is to set their feet on the soil of Eretz Yisrael. The study of the "old-fashioned type" who is coming to grips with the new life in the workers' settlement is indeed a fine piece of work. The writer Jacob Kaufman has masterfully portrayed the trials of an elderly woman who finds life in the new environment topsy-turvey, because it deviates from the ways of the *shtetel.*

The poetry of this section on Palestine is full of vigor, strength of life, love for the land. It is one long ode to the scenic beauty of the Palestine setting. The poems by Grossman, Kamzon, and Lander are particularly impressive. In this section there are also a number of studies on Jewish communities of the old European diaspora. "Wilna" by Greenblatt and "Butshatsh" by Israel Cohen are real studies of centuries-old Jewish centers that were reduced to ashes.

A Notable Contribution to Contemporary Hebrew Literature

The appendix to the book consists of transcribed speeches of the leaders of the Hebrew Writers' Association of Palestine that were delivered at their convention two years ago. These talks dealt with the European catastrophe and the Hebrew Writer's role in the light of the new situation.

This collection, *Mibait,* is indeed a very fine addition to the intellectual out-

put of Eretz Yisrael. It is another pillar upon which the structure of spiritual Palestine rests. It is another source for enrichment of Jewish life everywhere. But of greater importance is the fact that in the section dedicated to Europe, this book has partially made good a lack which was deeply felt in our midst for the last few years. It is a redeeming feature for all writers in Israel that this book took cognizance of our common tragedy in a number of spirited poems written in the Hebrew language, the true vehicle of Jewish expression. JUDAH PILCH

Random Thoughts

The one time you cannot think at random is when the smooth-tongued gentleman who accosts you suddenly hits you on the head with a bludgeon.

If the outcome is not so bad that others have to collect your brains, then you try at least to collect your thoughts.

* * *

The American Government has given us Jews a terrible knock in the head.

The result is psychic shock and combustion.

* * *

Our State Department's notion of America's moral leadership is to take the lead in war-mongering and in creating an atmosphere of universal panic.

* * *

No wonder there could be no room in that Department for Sumner Welles whose memorable words, spoken last October 13th and quoted in *The Nation,* if heeded, might have dissipated the cloud of impending world disaster.

"I believe," he said, "that the Palestine Settlement affords both the Soviet Union and the United States a field within which cooperation between them is altogether feasible, and that, if they will but employ it, they will find the path toward the solution of the differences between them much easier to follow.

"There has been no greater tragedy in recorded history than that which the Jewish people have suffered during these past years. Yet it is possible that through the settlement of the Palestine problem—the one fitting compensation which humanity can offer the survivors of that tragedy—the peoples of the world may find a way to avert a new holocaust, toward which we seem to be rapidly drifting and in which all that remains of our civilization would inevitably be destroyed."

* * *

We Jews are beginning to realize what it means to live in two civilizations.

It means to be bitterly frustrated as Jews and to be deeply ashamed as Americans.

* * *

Our Government's foreign policy is both literally and figuratively using oil to put out the fires of a world aflame with hate, suspicion and the threat of war.

* * *

History cannot catch its breath these days. It has been given a knockout blow in the solar plexus by the world champ.

* * *

*UN*cle Sam has almost *UN*done in one day the political gains achieved by fifty years of Jewish blood and sweat and tears.

* * *

World conflagrations have a habit of

starting from scraps of torn treaties and shreds of broken promises.

* * *

The UN has so far demonstrated the fact that though there may be honor among thieves, there is none among nations.

* * *

We shall probably have Secretary Marshall presently inform us that our national interest demands the sending of American soldiers to defend the helpless Arabs against Russian incursion into Palestine.

* * *

The function of being the chief outlet for credulity has been transferred from religion to patriotism.

* * *

In the football game in which the Jewish people is being kicked around, the U. S. has been running interference for Great Britain.

* * *

A hell on earth is infinitely more terrible than a hell in hell.

* * *

The British have a reputation for changing everything except the appearance of things and their own reputation for perfidy.

* * *

The present condition of man as described in Housman's plaintive lines, "A stranger and afraid, in a world I never made," is outdone by that of the *Yishuv* Jew.

For he may well complain: "A stranger and afraid, in a world I've helped to make."

* * *

The excess wordage in Senator Austin's statement may be charged to a guilty conscience.

* * *

The difference between Stalin and Marshall in their international policy is that the former liquidates those who stand in his way while the latter corrupts them by permitting them to liquidate those who stand in their way.

* * *

The UN is daily turning out to be a travesty of human hope and a catastrophe of human stupidity.

* * *

There is no political alchemy by which you can convert the dross of national greed into the gold of international decency.

* * *

We suspect that our Government too has adopted the dangerous assumption that the best way to divert our minds from the convulsions of a boom-and-bust economy is to bring on the bloody spasms of war, and that the only alternative to the mass production of misery and poverty is mass production of war *matériel.*

* * *

The American zigzag policy in Palestine has been marked at best by the kind of mushy-mindedness, aptly described by the late Morris R. Cohen. A mushy mind, he tells us is one that, rather than make a definite choice between heaven and hell, hopes to combine the best features of both.

* * *

The Marshall plan betrays the "Maginot Line" psychology, which depended for security on obsolete defenses.

* * *

Were it not for unconquerable faith which our tradition has kept alive in us, the sickening revulsion at the slimy hypocrisy of some of our "Christian" friends would be enough to convert us to the existentialist doctrine of "physical and metaphysical nausea," with its slogan, "Cheer up, the worst is yet to come."

* * *

What Max Brod has to say about Kafka applies to us Jews: "Unable to

accept the world, he turned himself into a universe. . . . Of all believers he was the freest from all illusions, and among all those who see the world as it is, without illusions, he was the most unshakable believer."

* * *

Once before we lived through dark days like these, and a great prophet then spoke words which are as true as they were twenty-six hundred years ago:

"Rage away, you nations—only to be shattered!
Listen to this, all lands afar!
Arm for the fray, and you shall be shattered!
Arm for the fray, and you shall be shattered!
Form your plot, and it shall fail;
Lay your plan, it never shall prevail:
For God is with us."

(*Moffat's translation*)

M. M. K.

REALITIES AND VALUES

(*Continued from Page* 8)

Therefore the ADL has hit upon the sound idea of fighting anti-Semitism by similar indirect and subtle ways. It is making available a "Community Projects Outline" prepared by the Institute for American Democracy, Inc. This program implants in the mind the idea of wholesome human relations between different ethnic and religious groups. It does this by means of radio-stories, newspaper ads, pictures on bill-boards, street car advertising, blotters, match boxes, etc.

▼

Religious News Service informs us in one of its releases that Douglas A. Hyde, the news editor of a London Communist paper, *The Daily Worker*, recently resigned from his job and the Communist Party and joined the Catholic Church. Not so long ago, Louis F. Budenz, managing editor of *The Daily Worker* of New York, took the same course.

It must seem baffling at first to explain why, when Communists "get religion," they go over to the church that is most conspicuously hostile to Communism.

Perhaps this may account for their actions. People who are baffled and confused about political questions seek escape from responsibility for doing their own thinking by depositing their conscience in the hands of a politically infallible *fuehrer*. Similarly, people who are baffled and confused about religion seek escape from the responsibility for doing their own thinking by depositing their conscience in the hands of an infallible church.

After all, Communism and Catholicism are psychologically akin. Both demand complete surrender of intellectual freedom to the authoritative interpreters of an accepted ideology or doctrine.

▼

In Talmudic times it was thought that there were seventy languages in the world. The revelation at Mt. Sinai was supposed to have been offered to all the nations in their own language, though it was accepted only by the Israelites.

Now there may be nations to whom our Bible has not come, but it has certainly been made known in many more languages than the seventy once thought to be all-inclusive. The American Bible Society reports that the Bible has been translated into 1,090 languages.

It is remarkable how many of our people can remain ignorant of the Bible in all the 1,090 languages into which it has been translated, as well as in its original Hebrew.